

# Knapp says he's out

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<http://www.thesentinel.com/mont/Knapp-County-Council->

Montgomery County Councilman Mike Knapp (D-Dist. 2) will not seek a third term on the council come November, according to a written statement from Knapp released Tuesday.

"I appreciate your continued faith in me as I complete my term in office," said Knapp, who served as council president in 2008 and vice president in 2007.

Knapp said he will pursue "new efforts to promote life sciences and job growth in the Washington area."

Knapp, who was first elected in 2002, serves as the chairman of the council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee and as a member of the Education Committee. Both committees experienced particularly difficult years as the county sought to fill a nearly \$4.4 billion budget shortfall. A decrease in property taxes were partly to blame for the budget gap and county schools were budgeted \$160 million less than they had hoped for in 2011.

Knapp said he will work with the area's leading biotechnology firms and research centers as the county moves in a new direction to make it a leading research area of the nation. He was a major advocate of the recent adoption of the Great Seneca Science Corridor master plan. Also, this year, the council approved a "biotech bill" Knapp sponsored, which garners \$2 million in tax credits for biotechnology companies. He currently works as a biotechnology consultant for Celera, a research institute renowned for mapping the human genome.

"Some of my proudest accomplishments are those that tend to get the least attention," Knapp said. "Whether it's new stoplights in Montgomery Village or near the Damascus recreation center, connecting fragments of sidewalks in Germantown, getting fire stations in Germantown and Clarksburg or ensuring that facilities like the Olney skate park or Germantown Library finally got built, these are the things that directly impact the daily lives of residents. I'm pretty proud of that."

"It's a unique situation that Mike Knapp has not yet announced whether he's running or not," had said Hans Riemer in an interview Monday. Riemer is running for an at-large seat on the council. "I think it's pretty well known that Craig Rice would like to run, but won't oppose Knapp if he wants to stay."

Maryland Delegate Craig Rice (D-Dist. 15) has not officially announced a run for Knapp's seat, but Democrat Sharon Dooley has, as well as Republican Robin Ficker, who has been outspoken about the adoption of a law that would limit the number of terms a county council member can serve.

“If a seat could just open up on that council, the race would be highly competitive and probably draw a lot of fresh and intelligent perspectives into the mix,” Ficker said in an earlier interview. Ficker announced Tuesday he would be on the ballot.

Knapp has not endorsed any candidate for his seat.